

Message Text

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47

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TH, LA

SUBJECT: CHARUNPHAN ON THAI/LAO RELATIONS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA
HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 13. FOLLOWING ARE EXTRACTS
FROM AN UNOFFICIALS USIS TRANSLATION OF
HIS COMMENTS ON THAI/LAO RELATIONS.

CHARUNPHAN: IN REGARD TO THE NEWS REPORT THAT
TIAO PHOUMI VONGVICHIT GAVE AN INTERVIEW TO A JAPANESE
NEWSPAPER, I FEEL THAT THE TONE OF THE REPORTED STATE-
MENTS ARE STRONG IN VIEW THAT A COALITION GOVERNMENT HAS
BEEN SET UP ALREADY. I FEEL IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT A
PERSON IN THAT POSITION, WHO IS BOTH DEPUTY PREMIER AND
FOREIGN MINISTER AT PRESENT, WOULD MAKE SUCH VIOLENT
STATEMENTS AS REPORTED. I DO NOT WISH TO BELIEVE THAT
REPORT BECAUSE A PERSON IN THAT POSITION SHOULD NOT MAKE
STATEMENTS THAT ARE SO STRONG. FURTHERMORE, SHOULD SUCH
STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN REALLY MADE WE SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED
A REPORT FROM OUR EMBASSY IF THIS INTERVIEW HAD BEEN
DISCLOSED IN LAOS. WE HAVE STATED ALREADY THAT THAILAND AND
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THE THAI GOVERNMENT WELCOMES THE COALITION GOVERNMENT SET

UP IN LAOS. WHEN I ATTENDED THE ASEAN CONFERENCE RECENTLY I MADE A STATEMENT TO THE CONFERENCE ON THAILAND'S ATTITUDE AND I SAID THAT WE WELCOME IT AND ARE READY TO GIVE FULL COOPERATION TO THE NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT OF LAOS. IN PARTICULAR BECAUSE WE ARE A CLOSE NEIGHBORING COUNTRY AND THIS COORDINATES WITH THAILAND'S POLICY WHICH HAS STATED ALREADY THAT WE PLACE GREAT IMPORTANCE ON NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WHICH ADJOIN US. I ALSO EXPLAINED THE SITUATION IN GENERAL THUS MAKING ALL 5 ASEAN MEMBER NATIONS BE OF THE UNANIMOUS VIEW THAT WE ARE GLAD TO GIVE COOPERATION AND AID TO THE KINGDOM OF LAOS IN WAYS THAT DO NOT CONCERN POLITICS, SUCH AS IN ECONOMY OR IN REGARD TO RECONSTRUCTION OF THAT COUNTRY. WE HAVE SUFFERED GREAT DIFFICULTIES AND TROUBLE FROM VARIOUS INCIDENTS THAT OCCURRED IN THE PAST. THEREFORE I HOPE THAT SUCH MATTERS WILL NOT BE FACED AGAIN AND THAT NOTHING WILL CAUSE REPERCUSSIONS SINCE WE HAVE THE BEST INTENTIONS. AFTER THE ASEAN JOINT COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED I FEEL CERTAIN THAT THE LAOS AMBASSADOR TO THAILAND, KEO VIPAKONE, WHO ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE AS AN OBSERVER, HAS MOST PROBABLY SUBMITTED A REPORT TO THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN ADDITION, THERE WERE TALKS ON APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP TO ASEAN. AND IT WAS SAID THAT THIS CONCERNS THE FUTURE AND IT IS UP TO THE PRESENT LAO GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER, THAT ASEAN IS OF THE VIEW THAT IT IS UP TO LAOS TO CONSIDER THE MATTER ITSELF. THEREFORE, IN VIEW OF THIS ATTITUDE OF THAILAND AND OF ASEAN. I DO NOT BELIEVE AND DO NOT WANT TO BELIEVE THAT PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, DEPUTY PREMIER AND FOREIGN MINISTER, WOULD MAKE UNFRIENDLY STATEMENTS IN AN INTERVIEW.

REPORTER: HAS THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HELD ANY NEGOTIATIONS YET FOR THE RELEASE OF THAIS WHO ARE PRISONERS OF WAR IN LAOS?

CHARUNPHAN: WE HAVE SPOKEN ON THIS SUBJECT WITH PRINCE SOUVANNA PHOUMA AND HE ADVISED US TO WAIT UNTIL A COALITION GOVERNMENT IS SET UP. I FEEL IT WOULD BE WISER FOR US TO WAIT A LITTLE LONGER, THAT IT IS STILL TOO SOON.

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REPORTER: REPORTS PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS STATE WE HAVE HELD NEGOTIATIONS WITH A THIRD COUNTRY TO HELP US IN THE MATTER.

CHARUNPHAN: WE HAVE NEVER MADE ANY CONTACTS AT ALL. SOME NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED A REPORT STATING WE WERE ASKING AMERICA TO HELP HOLD TALKS ON OUR BEHALF.

REPORTER: THE STATEMENT WAS MADE BY THE MINISTER OF
DEFENSE IN A PRESS CONFERENCE.

CHARUNPHAN/ THAT WAS ON CONTACTS WITH NORTH
VIETNAM. THIS MATTER OCCURRED IN LAOS THEREFORE IT IS
UP TO THE LAOS GOVERNMENT TO HELP HOLD TALKS. I FEEL THAT
THAT IS THE BEST WAY.
MASTERS

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